

## Essential Grant Tools

Grant writing can be a soul destroying, painstaking task. But the rewards can be incredible. If you're new to this space, we recommend you join Philanthropy Australia and have at least one staff member attend their introductory grant writing skills course. Strategic Grants also run fantastic courses for all skill levels. (Their web details are below).

If you're interested in finding philanthropic grant opportunities for your non-profit, then here are some essential building blocks that will hopefully make things a little easier.

### 1. Where to find grant opportunities

The nature and structure of grant applications, the funding criteria and the submission processes vary with every Foundation and Trust. If you have no prior experience in this area then there are several support networks and search engines you can go to. A few of these are listed below:

- a. Our Community and Funding Centre – [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)
- b. Philanthropy Australia – [www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au) (a paid membership is required to search grants on this site)
- c. Pathways Australia – <http://pathwaysaustralia.com.au/category/government-funding-alerts/> (a paid membership is required to search grants on this site)
- d. Local Council websites
- e. ClubNSW ClubGRANTS – [www.clubsnsw.com.au/community/clubgrants](http://www.clubsnsw.com.au/community/clubgrants)
- f. Websites of specific Trusts and Foundations
- g. The Grants Hub <http://www.thegrantshub.com.au/>
- h. Strategic Grants - <https://www.strategicgrants.com.au/>

### 2. The Grant Readiness Checklist

- Do you have DGR 1 status?
- Do you have audited financials and a certificate of incorporation?
- Do you know your organisation's key marketing messages?
- Can you describe your organisation in 100 words?
- Do you have a bank of projects for funding that fit with your Vision and Mission
- Do you have a reporting and acquittal process in place?
- Do you have access to a 'team' of people to share the grant writing and acquittal process?  
(One person simply can't handle this alone.)

### 3. The Project Readiness Checklist

- Have you read and carefully analyzed the funders “Grant Guidelines”? (If you don’t meet their criteria as an organisation you may need to partner with another organisation.)
- Can you describe your project and its objective in 200 words?
- Can you demonstrate that your project meets a real community need or solves a real problem?
- Can you substantiate that need with evidence?
- Can you say who exactly how many people will directly and indirectly benefit?
- Have you completed a project plan and budget?
- Do you actually have the capacity to deliver this project within a realistic timeframe?
- Ensure your project plan is logical with clear, measurable performance parameters. (Do you know what success would look like?)
- Do you have local partners you will collaborating with?
- Do you have access to other sources of funding?
- Is there a plan in place to make this project sustainable beyond the life of the Foundations funding?
- Do you have a website and social media to support the project awareness?

### 4. The Grant Writing Checklist

- Read the Grant Guidelines on the funder’s website before you begin and ensure your project is a fit. (Warning: Do not attempt to ring and ask any question that may be covered in the grant guidelines.)
- Stick to the word limits and only answer the questions asked. Your writing needs to be absolutely succinct. (Know any school teachers?). Is there anyone who can share the writing with you?
- Make sure you answer every question. Foundations are often swamped with applications, if you omit an answer this won’t go down well.
- Get someone with fresh eyes to review the lot.
- Lodge your application before the due date.

### Some final thoughts.....

#### a) If your grant application is successful

- You now need to move into relationship management phase. First up, a written thank you from the CEO with a personal invitation to visit your organisation is always a really smart idea. Your new partner wants to be part of the project; they want to be in the loop on your progress, so make contact as soon as you get the good news. Before your first progress report is due invite them over, get on social media with word of their generosity, share the love... and keep sharing it.
- Make sure everyone involved in your project clearly understands their responsibilities. Create a project timeline

**b) If you're not successful**

- If possible, seek feedback on your application. Many organisations say they are unable to provide this due to the number of applicants. If you're unable to seek feedback, a written letter from the CEO inviting them to visit or sending them more information (client stories) is a great idea. Just keep them in the loop on the real social impacts your organisation is achieving in your communities. This is a long term relationship, keep that foot in the door and be nice. (My biggest sales have always come after a long string of "no's)

I hope this helps! 😊